In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for safely accessing shared storage media in a computer environment having two or more nodes comprising:

reading a storage media label in response to an access request to storage media;

obtaining a hardware identifier from said storage media;

comparing said hardware identifier of said storage media with a hardware identifier field of said label;

establishing access rights of said nodes to said storage media, the step of establishing access rights is responsive at least in part to a hard attribute of said shared storage media, and includes creating said label including said hard attribute, a type field, and a node identifier field;

determining whether to allow access of a requesting node to said storage media by matching a ~~said~~ node identifier of said requesting node to said node identifier of said label;

allowing access of said requesting node to said storage media in response to said match of said node identifier of said requesting node with said node identifier of said label; and

accessing said storage media by said requesting node according to said access rights.

2. Canceled

3. Canceled

4. Canceled

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising said label having a cluster identifier; and

further comprising determining whether to allow access of said requesting node to said storage media by matching said cluster identifier of said requesting node to said storage media cluster identifier;

allowing access of said requesting node ~~nodes~~ to said storage media in response to said match of said cluster identifier of said requesting node with said storage media cluster identifier; and

accessing said storage media by said requesting node ~~nodes~~ according to said access rights.

6. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein said label further includes an activity interval field and an activity counter field for protecting ownership of said storage media.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the computer environment is a storage area network.

8. (Currently Amended) A computing environment comprising:

two or more nodes;

shared storage media;

said storage media having a label and a hard attribute;

said label having a node identifier field;

an access manager to read said label in response to a storage media access request from one of said nodes, to obtain a hardware identifier from said storage media, and to compare a hardware ~~said node~~ identifier of said storage media with a hardware identifier field in said label; ~~and~~

said manager to establish access rights of said nodes to said storage media, responsive in part to a hard attribute of said shared storage media, and to create said label including said hard attribute, a type field, and a node identifier field;

said manager to allow access of a ~~said~~ requesting node to said storage media responsive to a match of a ~~said~~ node identifier of ~~said~~ a requesting node with said hardware identifier of said label; and

said manager to allow access to said storage media by said requesting node based upon said match.

9. Canceled

10. Canceled

11. Canceled

12. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 8 ~~10~~, wherein said label further includes a cluster identifier field; and further comprising said manager to allow access of said requesting node to said storage media responsive to a match of a ~~said~~ cluster identifier of said requesting node with a ~~said~~ cluster identifier of said label.

13. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 8 ~~10~~, wherein said label further comprises an activity data field and an activity counter field to protect ownership of said media.

14. (Currently Amended) An article comprising:

a computer-readable recordable data storage medium;

means in the medium for reading a storage media label in response to an access request to ~~shared~~ storage media;

means in the medium for obtaining a hardware identifier from said storage media;

means in the medium for comparing said hardware identifier of said storage media with a hardware identifier field of said label;

means in the medium for accessing ~~shared~~ storage media, said ~~shared~~ storage media having a hard attribute including a label having a type field and a node identifier field;

means in the medium for determining whether to allow access of a requesting node to said storage media by matching a ~~said~~ node identifier of said requesting node to a ~~said~~ node identifier of said label;

means in the medium for allowing access of said requesting node to said storage media in response to a match of said node identifier of said requesting node with said node identifier of said label; and

means in the medium for providing ~~accessing said storage media by~~ said requesting node

access to said storage media based upon said match.

15. Canceled

16. Canceled

17. (Currently Amended) The article of claim 14, further comprising said label having a cluster identifier field, wherein said managing means grants a positive access request to a node in a cluster responsive to confirmation of cluster ownership of said media.

18. (Currently Amended) A method for safely accessing ~~access~~ shared storage media in a computing environment having two or more nodes comprising:

writing a label, said label being determined at least in part by a hardware identifier of said storage media, said hardware identifier including a node identifier field;

reading said label in response to an access request to said storage media;

obtaining said hardware identifier from said storage media;

comparing said hardware identifier of said storage media with a hardware identifier field of said label, including comparing a node identifier of a requesting node with a node identifier in said label;

allowing access of said requesting node to said storage media if said label indicates said storage media is node-owned and said node identifier in said label matches a node identifier of said requesting node; and

accessing said storage media by said requesting node according to said label.

19. Canceled

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18, further comprising the step of allowing access of a node in a cluster to said media if a type field in said label indicates said storage media is cluster-owned and a cluster identifier in said label matches a cluster identifier of said requesting node.